

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 157

By Tracy

A RESOLUTION to designate April 2-6, 2007 as "Work Zone Awareness Week" in Tennessee.

WHEREAS, road construction and road maintenance, performed by construction workers, utility personnel, and maintenance workers, plays an essential role in our ability to be a mobile and free nation; and

WHEREAS, construction zones present a challenge and danger to all motorists, and improvements in safety design, law enforcement, and driver behavior will benefit drivers of all ages; and

WHEREAS, of the more than 200,000 reported traffic crashes which occur in Tennessee each year, more than 25% involve injuries to one or more vehicle occupants; and

WHEREAS, 1,282 fatalities occurred on Tennessee's roads and highways in 2006; and

WHEREAS, during the period of 2002-2006, there were 118 fatalities in work zones on Tennessee roads and highways; and

WHEREAS, the most frequently occurring contributing factors to motor vehicle accidents in construction zones are negligence, careless driving, speeding, and failure to obey signs and traffic controls; and

WHEREAS, according to the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety, a teenager is killed and seven are injured in a work zone crash every three days in this country; studies show that young drivers are more likely to be involved in work zone crashes than others, as they are more likely to take risks, be distracted, or be nervous while driving; and

WHEREAS, in 2004, approximately 245 sixteen- and seventeen-year-old drivers were involved in work zone crashes in Tennessee, one of which resulted in a fatality, and, in 2005, fifty-five of the 1,270 traffic fatalities in Tennessee involved sixteen- and seventeen-year-old drivers; and

WHEREAS, recognizing that teen drivers have higher rates of fatal crash involvement than any other age group, the Department of Transportation, in partnership with the Department of Safety and other groups, has established a work zone driving safety program for high school students; and

WHEREAS, the program, entitled "Get in the Zone," has provided, in its first year, more than one thousand Tennessee high schools with "Get in the Zone" materials for classroom use, and hundreds of students have participated in work zone safety programs presented by the Department of Transportation; and

WHEREAS, the young people who participate in the "Get in the Zone" program gain a greater appreciation for the responsibilities which come with driving and the knowledge they need to safely travel through work zones, protecting themselves as well as the men and women who put their lives at risk each day in work zones across the State; and

WHEREAS, the observance of "Tennessee Construction Work Zone Awareness Week" will provide an excellent opportunity to enumerate the benefits of road maintenance and serve as a reminder to all Tennesseans to drive carefully in construction zones; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that for the purposes delineated in the preamble of this resolution, April 2-6, 2007, is hereby designated as "Work Zone Awareness Week" in Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this General Assembly wholeheartedly endorses and supports increasing construction and maintenance work zone awareness and the work zone safety education of young drivers through the "Get in the Zone" program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.